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ASHLAND, O., Dec. 14, 1887.

Right, But it Don't Apply.

The cry of religious persecution is hardly in place where every man and woman is granted the liberty of worshiping God according to the dicates of their own conscience. When a man or woman determines to ignore the accepted principles of the church to which they belong, and they are expelled for so doing, such expulsion cannot be called persecution, as the party is at perfect liberty to do as they wish by going to the church which will grant the liberties desired. But no church would be justified in changing its form of government to accommodate the few dissatisfied ones, to the detriment of the many who are true to their baptismal vows.

We transcribe the above from the *Gospel Messenger*, the organ of the German Baptist church, and the Annual Meeting of that church. Upon a supposed premise the arguments contained in the extract are sound and logical, and we can endorse them with all our soul, mind and strength. But they will not apply to the German Baptist church. We recognize the right of everybody to choose their religious association, and the fact also that no member has the right to undertake to change the established principles of such association.

The History of the German Baptist church shows that it has departed from the established principles of the religious body known as Tunkers. Where men, on equal footing, organize themselves into a society for the purpose of cultivating their moral and religious faculties, and sustaining one another in the true service of the true God, each party is supposed to have his religious interest respected and sustained. But if a portion of that organization, after a certain period of years has passed, changes the vital principles of that organization, against the desires and convictions of the remaining members, it disfranchizes the rights of that part of the constituency, and becomes a traitor unto them.

That the Gospel of Jesus Christ should be the only law in religion was the grand, fundamental principle and premise of the early Tunker church. They had no church government; they needed none; and no gospel-alone church does need any. This one, united, whole-compassing, eternal idea was the standard of that church in its foundation.

In harmony with that principle, the ministers of that holy order preached that doctrine, and the people obeyed—were converted and expected to live by it and die by it. But in course of time, an insignificant minority, known as Annual Meeting robbed Christ of his authority as law-giver, and took the government from his shoulders, and set up another central principle as supreme and paramount, which is "*the order of the church*," and this order was the work of self-righteous and ambitious men; and because those complained whose inherited religious rights were confiscated, they were expelled. And not only is the sentence of condemnation passed upon them, but their characters, in some instances are defamed, and their inalienable religious privileges under the government of this country are not respected, and obstacles are placed in their respective paths of Christian duty.

No part of any religious society under any law of God or principle of justice or equity, has the right to confiscate the privileges and immunities of any other part so long as that part is true to the acknowledged principles of the society. This principle German Baptist elders have ignored time and again, and treated it as an insult hurled into their faces.

The baptismal vow should be in harmony with the doctrine taught by the ministers of the church. This has not been the case with some ministers of the German Baptist church in the past. Their ministry taught that they used only the Bible as a rule of faith and practice, and that they had no creed or discipline. Then under the influence of such preaching, sinners were awakened to a sense of their duty, and while possessing a contrite heart under the convicting power or the spirit of God, they were asked to vow obedience to a code of the tradition of the elders, instead of the holy law of Christ as they were taught.

We venture to believe the fact that members of the Brethren church were in mind when the above extract was written, and we assert that it does not apply to Brethren because they are persecuted in places; and the German Baptists have expelled members in many places where the accepted principles of that church were not ignored.

The Brethren at Huntingdon, Pa., have no room to make such arguments, so long as their fellow-laborers are doing what they are. Every man should set his own house in order first, and then it will do to tell about the place of others. G.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

Another good report comes in from brother DeBolt's field of labor.

Christmas is almost here again. The work in the Master's vineyard has not been as great as it ought have been, yet it has been very encouraging. During the remaining part of the winter, we expect a much greater work will be done.

Brethren do not expect that every thing will be as lovely as a May morning, in your Christian journey. Remember that we are now upon a stormy sea. There will be foes without and false brethren within, and we must expect trouble; especially as long as our nets catch all kinds. The Christian religion has always been perishing, and its history is an unbroken story of defeats. But every time it is defeated it comes forward to the next contest stronger, broader and more healthy than ever before. But one grand, overwhelming, crushing defeat will be given the enemy of all righteousness by and by. Then we will all shout victory.

The Congress of the United States is again in session and the chief anxiety of the politicians is to know what to do to make themselves more popular than their political opponents; or how they can make the most money. How soon the work of that body could be done if every one was guided by Christian principles.

Bro. Miller, of Sidney, Ind., gets in at a few good points upon the subject of church government. The societies of the Brethren church should learn now that the *will of a church*, or a majority of a church, as a religious law, is as great a sin in the sight of God as the decree of a Pope or a decision of Annual Meeting. A Gospel alone church should never ask the vote of the church upon any religious doctrine or Christian practice. You may ask, then how will you settle questions of doctrine and practice? Why, do like all gospel Christians. Take the New Testament and give it to your most able, devout, conscientious and god-fearing brethren, and accept their understanding of it. If they err, it will be an error, and is excusable. A church is as liable to err as an individual, and in making law they ignore the authority of Christ as the law-giver.

Deciding by a vote of the church, who should be received into the church, how baptism should be performed, whether there should be a salutation of the kiss, whether the sick should be anointed or not, how or when the Lord's supper should be observed and what it should be composed of, whether the feet should he washed before or after supper, or between the meal and emblems,—is all wrong, where the confession of faith is "The Gospel Alone.'

The early Brethren church washed feet after supper. Its best scholars studied the Scriptures and concluded that the example of Christ taught a different practice. Then they changed. That was gospel alone. They changed, because the Word taught them differently. So let every gospel-alone man be—ready to change when he has new light.

If one church has a right to vote on a question of practice or doctrine, why has not two churches a right to come together and vote? If two have, why not four? If four have, why not a thousand—an Annual Meeting.

Gospel-alone brethren, beware of the council meeting that assumes the character of a legislative body, and passes laws as to what shall be the doctrine or practice of a gospel-alone church of Jesus Christ.

The Rev. W. R. Taylor says a needed word in view of our necessary study of ways and means, that "we might as well make up our minds to it first as last, that for the converting of men to God there is no substitute for downright hard work with individual men and women. All Christian history is with us on this point."

After a long contest, the city government of St. Louis has decided to no longer teach German in its public schools. This is a victory for the English language.

Yale and Amherst Colleges have put the Bible on the list of elective studies. There is no other book in existence, that contains such a great variety of literature, such history and ethics as the Bible, and it certainly can be studied profitably, considered apart from its divine character.

In Berlin, Germany, there is a law in force that no church shall cost less than $50,000. The law interferes greatly with the progress of mission work. We can realize what a hindrance it would be in this country.

Most of the protestant churches of this country grant certificates of membership to their members, when they desire to change their church relationship, and give them an honorable dismissal and treat them with Christian courtesy and respect afterwards; but there are a few churches that expel their members as heretics, and treat them as such because they prefer to change their church relationship; and we know where children have been banished from home and disinherited, because they united with a different church from that which their parents belonged. This is religious persecution, and the church which upholds it is a persecuting church and its religion is not the religion of Christ. The true Christian church is not, and never was a persecuting church. Not everything that is done in the name of Christianity is Christianity.

Two speeches by Mr. Henry W. Grady, one of the editors of the *Atlanta Constitution*, on the subject of Prohibitioni, delivered Nov. 8 and 17, 1887. These are stirring and eloquent addresses. They are wholesome reading for the whole country. They can be had for 10 cents a copy or $4 for one hundred by addressing W. J. Campbell, Atlanta, Ga.

Last year the Methodists raised, from all sources, the amount of $1,363,074.91, for missionaries. This year they propose to raise a larger sum.

Bro. Bauman is all right this week. He almost excites us.

A brother in the West says, "Let us have less contention and more vital piety. What we want is the principles of the church made prominent, and not a few men. The principles of the Brethren church were preached and practiced long before some of our 'would-be-dads,' or 'would-be-popes' lived."

A most important decision was made by the Supreme Courts of the United States, last week. Prohibition was declared constitutional. This is an overwhelming defeat of the dram shop—the doom of the dram shop is spoken. The arrogance of the liquor craft in its demand had become astounding, but in this contest it has sustained a crushing defeat. It is a great victory for prohibition.

The Presbyterian church had a membership of 1,000 in 1644. Now it has 696,767.

The Scientific American, published by the great patent agency firm of Munn & Co., New York, is the most practically useful publication of its kind in the country. Indeed it occupies a field distinctively its own. Not alone for the machinist, manufacturer, or scientist, but it is a journal for popular perusal and study. It is the standard authority on scientific and mechanical subjects. It is placed at a very low rate of subscription, $3 per annum, which places it within the reach of all. Subscriptions will be received at the office of this paper.

From the Vindicator we learn that the next Yearly meeting of the Old Order Brethren will be held on the farm of Daniel Wagoner, in Macon County, Ill., three and a half miles west of Cerro Gordo.

Every sister should read sister M. M. Sterling's article on the Society for Christian Endeavor, and help her along in the excellent work she has commenced.

We will publish Bishop Weaver's sermon on pride, when there is scarcity of copy. To Bro. Copp.

The Christian Cynosure thus exultantly shouts over the Supreme Court decision:—

"Michigan, Tennessee, Texas, Oregon—in all, the prohibitory amendment has been defeated, but in Washington we have a victory that makes good our loss. When Judge Harlan arose in the Supreme Court on Monday and read a long, elaborate and practically unanimous opinion sustaining the judgment of the Kansas courts, it was an hour for the land to sing Hallelujah. The constitutionality of the Kansas law is thus affirmed, and the decision against compensating liquor dealers and manufacturers for property rendered worthless by the police laws of a State is made the law of the land. This is a VICTORY. It will not greatly effect Kansas, for liquordom was not worth much in that State, but for Illinois, Kentucky, Tennessee, and other States, where tens of millions are invested in the traffic it is of utmost importance. A contrary decision would have burdened the prohibitory movement and crushed it down to earth. The Supreme Court has been reported as evenly divided on this question, and the result is therefore more Glorious. Praise the Lord!

Holsinger Correspondence.

Since my last we have received two members by baptism, who are enjoying their new relations very much, and we are enjoying their fellowship, and they are good workers. We have also received our brother Frank Fields, from the Portage Prairie church, by certificate. Bro. F., is a deacon, and an active worker in the church. I wish we could receive about thirty times three more such members. We have a very nice little congregation of peaceable, loving members here in South Bend. They are all willing to do what they can for the cause. On Thursday, Dec. 1st, we held a business meeting, at which they unanimously re-elected me pastor for another year; but I could only accept until they can secure another pastor, and at the longest until Apr. 1st, 1888.

Bro. J. M. Rittgers conducted a protracted meeting for us lately, from Saturday evening over two Sundays. We happened to have mostly bad weather, and so could not get up a very deep interest, but it was surely not the fault of the preaching. Bro. R., preaches good, sound doctrine, and I love to hear him. He is a revivalist, and I can recommend him to the churches. You need not be ashamed of his preaching anywhere. While we had no accessions of members, we did have development in those that were within.

I preached for the church at Ocoya, Ill., over last Sunday, Dec. 4th, and baptized a young lady on Monday morning. The church there is in a promising condition. Bro. J. H. Worst is expected there on the 23rd inst, to conduct a protracted meeting. The Lord bless his labors.

I read brother Beer's correspondence in last week's EVANGELIST. I beg his pardon for spilling the cold water where he didn't want it, and think I can promise him not to do so again. I should have known that I knew nothing about the value of printing offices. I sold an office in 1873, with five thousand subscribers, when material was forty per cent. higher than it is now, for four thousand dollars, but then I didn't sell to the church. I have, however, had my say, and, unless driven to it in self-defense, will not again refer to the matter. I don't think my influence has injured the project. It would have died at any rate. If Bro. Beer will assume entire control of the paper, everything will be satisfactory.

In hope of the Sweet by-and-by, Fraternally,

H. R. HOLSINGER.

Mine Run Furnace, Va.

Nov. 30.—I have been very quiet since I have been in the old Dominion, and partly so because my work has not been satisfactory to myself. I have preached so far 34 times in Virginia, and have only 12 additions to report; eleven by baptism and one by relation. But the trouble is I have preached that number of sermons with 8 moves, which is too many to do successful work. Four times I moved because of appointments ahead, and twice I was crowded with other people's services. At one place I was interfered with in a most singular manner. I preached on Baptism on Saturday night, giving Bible for our position without interfering in any way with others; not intimating that there was no other way unless the intimation was taken from Bible quotations. But to my surprise I was followed in the same place on Sunday by a pedo-baptist and for the first time witnessed infant baptism and listened in vain for a Bible argument in support of it. I heard only a natural course of reasoning relative to planting in hot beads and transplanting from the same. The only hot bed feature I could see, or at least the most prominent was, hot bed of unbelief, there to remain unless awakened by the spirit of the gospel and removed therefrom by the exercise of faith and "buried with Christ" and "planted together in the likeness of his death."